NATIONAL LIBRARY of MEDICINE

# NEWS

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**News Subscribers to Receive Summaries**

## NIH Consensus Development Conferences

Beginning this month, *NLM News* subscribers will receive full details about the latest NIH consensus development conferences.

As part of a cooperative effort between NLM and the Office of the Director, NIH, to disseminate important conclusions and recommendations developed at consensus sessions, readers will be sent formal conference summaries. To date, NIH has planned more than 24 consensus development conferences for 1979. Summaries of all conferences will be made available shortly after the sessions conclude.

Consensus development is a process which brings together research scientists, practicing physicians, consumers, and others in an effort to reach general agreement on the efficacy and safety of a medical technology. Ethical issues and cost implications may also be addressed at consensus conferences. Differing points of view are reported to present a complete picture.

**Problem: to evaluate and disseminate**

The consensus development mechanism was proposed by NIH in February 1977. There had been no formal process within the biomedical research community to assure systematic identification and evaluation of clinically relevant research information. A mechanism to effectively transfer that information—at the appropriate time—to health care practice was also lacking.

At the time, there was growing concern that a number of technologies had been widely accepted by practitioners without sufficient information about risks, benefits, cost-effectiveness, and societal side effects. And other well-validated innovations had been slow to reach the practicing community. Still other medical technologies were in use, even though they had been found to be marginally useful, or even potentially harmful. *continued on page 2*

## New Zip: 20209

The National Library of Medicine has a new, exclusive ZIP code: 20209. New stationery and envelopes reflecting this change are on order, but we will use our existing supplies until they are exhausted. Correspondence should now be addressed to:

National Library of Medicine
Bethesda, MD **20209**

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NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
NEWS

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With this background, NIH proposed that a new and more effective channel for information transfer be opened from the research to the practicing community and general public. It would complement, but not replace, traditional publication of biomedical research data in the open literature. One of the main objectives of the proposal was to involve the biomedical research community more fully in the assessment of technologies and preparation of information for use by practitioners, third-party payers, regulators, and the public.

The first NIH consensus development conference was held in September 1977, as a broadly representative panel of experts and laymen reached agreement on a list of recommendations and conclusions on breast cancer screening. NIH's National Cancer Institute, which cosponsored the meeting, later adopted a number of key recommendations.

**Mechanisms for technology assessment**

In October 1978, the Office for Medical Applications of Research (OMAR) was formally created at NIH, headed by Seymour Perry, M.D., NIH Associate Director for Medical Applications of Research. OMAR's main duties are to coordinate and offer technical assistance to NIH technology assessment activities. The consensus development conferences are coordinated by this office.

A short time later, the 95th Congress, just before adjournment, passed legislation creating a National Center for Health Care Technology (NCHCT) within the Office of the HEW Assistant Secretary for Health. The NCHCT coordinates the assessment activities of all HEW agencies and sets technology priorities. The Center makes recommendations on the cost-effectiveness, appropriateness, and medical validity of various technologies to HEW's Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement agency, the Health Care Financing Administration.

Also part of the technology assessment structure is the congressional Office of Technology Assessment. Its main function is to provide Congress with independent information about potential beneficial and harmful effects of technological applications.

Momentum has begun to build behind the NIH consensus development activities as the number of conferences scheduled for this year is more than double that for 1978. As interest in this effort continues to grow, the NIH and OMAR, with assistance from the NLM, plan to intensify their efforts in the critical area of reporting the results of consensus development conferences to all audiences.

The first conference to be reported to *NLM News* readers (enclosed with this issue) is "Pain, Discomfort, and HumanitarianCare," a consensus development panel on management of pain and discomfort in the terminally ill, organized under the Federal Interagency Committee on New Therapies for Pain and Discomfort. The conference was sponsored by various elements of NIH, FDA, and the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA). The consensus development panel was held on February 16, 1979.

Summaries of future conferences will be mailed separately, with a notice in the *News* to alert subscribers that they are being sent.

## Site "Visits" by Satellite

On February 15, within the span of two hours, a committee of the Association of American Medical Colleges conducted site "visits" at three widely separated universities. The schools, affiliated in the WAMI (Washington, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) program of distributed medical education, are the University of Washington Medical School in Seattle, the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, and the Montana State University in Bozeman.

The site visits provided an interim progress report to the AAMC's Liaison Committee on Medical Education. They updated the last full-dress site visit in 1975, when nine LCME members took over a week to travel to the three universities.

The February 15 site visits were made possible by the interactive audio and video capability of the Communications Technology Satellite (CTS). Outside of NLM's Lister Hill Center satellite studio in Billings Auditorium one of Washington's new breed of snow storm was raging.

The Liaison Committee, chaired by Dr. J.R. Schofield, first went by satellite to Seattle, where the members were briefed by Dr. M. Roy Schwartz, Director of the WAMI program, and other staff of the University of Washington Medical School. Then on to Fairbanks, where the briefing was led by Howard Cutter, Chancellor of the University of Alaska. The last report to the LCME, from Bozeman, was by Dr. Frank Newman, WAMI Coordinator for Montana.

The program then returned to Seattle for a wrap-up by Dr. Swartz. It was interesting, if not surprising, to learn that WAMI is succeeding in what it set out to do: recruiting more medical students from Alaska, Montana, and Idaho. The first students to graduate under the WAMI program are now returning, with one exception, to their native heaths to practice. The exception is a student from the University of Alaska who is now studying at the LBJ School of Tropical Medicine in Samoa!

The participants left the Lister Hill Center studio at 5 p.m. to find that they were alone in the building, which had closed for a snow emergency an hour earlier. We did manage to find their luggage, the only open door, and their taxis.

Harold Wooster, Ph.D.

## 18th Century Catalogue

*A Short Title Catalogue of Eighteenth Century Printed Books in the National Library of Medicine.* Compiled by John B. Blake. 1979. Casebound, v, 501pp. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price: $11.50 ($14.40 foreign). Stock Number 017-052-00198-1. (Scheduled to appear April 1979; orders now being accepted.)

This new, major compilation in the history of medicine lists approximately 25,000 items, printed from 1701 through 1800, which are held in the History of Medicine collection of the National Library of Medicine. Between 30 and 40 percent of these items have not been recorded in either the *Index-Catalogue* or *The National Union Catalog pre-1956 Imprints.* The new work thus reveals the breadth and depth of this great collection which successive generations of librarians have been building for over a century.

The *Catalogue's* compiler is John B. Blake, Ph.D., Chief of NLM's History of Medicine Division.

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For information on other publications and activities of the History of Medicine Division, send a self-addressed mailing label to:

Office of Inquiries
M121 Attn: HIST MED
National Library of Medicine
Bethesda, MD 20209

# South Central Regional Medical Library Program

by Jean K. Miller*

TALON is the acronym for the South Central Regional Medical Library Program which comprises Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. The administrative headquarters is The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas (UTHSCD). TALON functions as a decentralized program with twelve participating Resource Libraries** responsible for coordinating library services in geographic subregions.

Participation in the RML document delivery network continues to be one of the prime activities of TALON. Much time and effort has been expended in recent months to provide an equitable system for shared financial support of interlibrary loans. The large number of small hospitals (59 percent with 75 beds or less), spread over a wide geographic area, mandates a network which can provide information to health professionals in remote locations. During FY 1978 the TALON network filled 101,755 interlibrary loan requests.

TALON has been increasing its efforts to provide assistance to library personnel in institutions other than Resource Libraries. The Program Development Coordinator of TALON is available for consultation on library activities and problems, and works with the TALON Training and CE Task Force Committee members in the development of training classes for library managers and personnel. A cadre of qualified librarians has been identified to assist with consultation and extension activities throughout the Region. Two audiovisual consultants are also available. Minimal financial support has been available through RML contract funds, but in many geographic subregions the Resource Libraries have been very generous in providing personnel and funds for this purpose. A library manual for hospital librarians and managers is in production and will be published in 1979.

**In addition to the library, the Florence Bioinformation Center at the University of Texas Health Science Center, Dallas, houses a computer center and the biomedical communications department.**

Assisting the basic units to strengthen their collections and the library services they provide is an integral function of the RML program, and is receiving more emphasis. The hospital librarians are increasing their efforts to provide optimal services to their users and at the same time they are seeking to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with libraries of all types. The chairperson of the recently appointed Hospital Librarians Committee, an ad hoc committee of the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), participates in meetings of the RAC and represents the interests of this group.

Consortium development is encouraged but the isolation of many institutions frequently makes it difficult to accomplish. The Duplicate

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* Director, Library, University of Texas Health Science Center, 5323 Harry Hines Blvd., Dallas, Texas 75235. This article continues a series on the Regional Medical Libraries begun in the June 1978 *NLM News*.

** University of New Mexico Library of the Medical Sciences (Albuquerque); Louisiana State University School of Medicine Library (Shreveport); Texas Medical Association Library (Austin); University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Library (Oklahoma City); The University of Texas Medical Branch Library (Galveston); The University of Texas Health Science Center Library (Dallas); Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Library (Houston); University of Arkansas Medical Center Library (Little Rock); Louisiana State University Medical Center Library (New Orleans); The University of Texas Health Science Center Library (San Antonio); Rudolph Matas Medical Library, Tulane University (New Orleans); Texas Tech University Health Sciences Information Center (Lubbock).

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Periodical Program which assembles, lists, and distributes medical journals to small hospitals, clinics, new medical schools, etc., has provided impetus to the development of small or new libraries and the services they are able to provide. The RML staff and the regional consultants are increasing their efforts to encourage small libraries to enhance their development by submitting appropriate grant applications.

The NLM online bibliographic network within TALON has expanded 58 percent in the last year. There are now 68 search centers in the Region; 22 of these are in hospital libraries. Of 101 search analysts, 72 have attended formal NLM training. Demonstrations and response to individual inquiries are used to promote the expansion of the network. Initial and advanced training of search analysts is available within the Region.

Progress has continued in the efforts to encourage and develop programs promoting the shared acquisition of and access to library materials within the Region. The *TALON Union List of Serials,* 4th edition, was published in the fall of 1978; the *TALON Union Catalog of Monographs,* 4th and 5th editions (in microfiche) replace the earlier composite card file and microfilmed list maintained for the collections of the twelve Resource Libraries at the UTHSCD. The 2nd edition of the *TALON Nonprint Media Catalog,* listing nonprint items available for interlibrary loan within the Region, was published in December 1978. Financial support for all of these publications has been provided by the Resource Libraries.

Further commitment to increase shared resources began, January 1979 with the initiation of the Cooperative Acquisition of Monographs Project. Each Resource Library has agreed to purchase, in depth, the monographs of designated publishers to insure their availability within the Region. Under consideration by the Regional Advisory Committee is a program for the cooperative acquisition of serials.

TALON is an ever-changing organization. Continual reassessment of its goals and objectives is necessary as the needs of the health professionals within the Region increase and as the design for providing optimal library services evolves.

## Publications Notes

### 1978 Current Catalog Annual

*National Library of Medicine Current Catalog, 1978 Annual Cumulation:* Casebound, 1,728 pp. (Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.) Price $25.00 ($31.25 foreign). Stock Number 017-052-00200-7. This publication is a bibliographic listing of monographs and serials cataloged by the Library in 1978. It contains listings by both subject and name. (The annual cumulation is *not* furnished automatically to subscribers to the quarterlies, but must be ordered separately.) The annual supersedes the 1978 quarterlies, and includes a substantial number of older records which were recataloged or revised in 1978 but were not included in the quarterlies.

### 1979 List of Journals Indexed

*List of Journals Indexed in Index Medicus, 1979.* 150 pp. (Superintendent of Documents.) Price $3.50 ($4.40 foreign). Stock Number 017-052-00199-0. In addition to abbreviation, full title, subject, and geographic listings of the 2,562 *Index Medicus* journals, the *LJI* includes sections listing dentistry, nursing, and reproduction journals which are indexed for MEDLINE but not *Index Medicus.*

### Online Reference Manual Supplement

*NLM Online Services Reference Manual, Supplement I.* January 1979. 246 pp. (National Tech-

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nical Information Service, Springfield, VA 22161.) Price: $9.50 ($3.00 microfiche). PB-291-793. This supplement provides new or revised pages for inserting in the *NLM Online Services Reference Manual* (Jan. 1978, NTIS, $15, PB-277-167). The new or revised sections include CATLINE, AVLINE, TOXLINE, RTECS, HISTLINE, BIOETHICS, and HEALTH. Also included are replacement pages for a number of other sections, as well as a new Index.

## NMAC Acting Director Named

**Charles N. Farmer**

Charles N. Farmer has been named Acting Director of NLM's National Medical Audiovisual Center. Mr. Farmer succeeds Dr. Myron J. Adams, Jr., who has accepted a position as Program Review Coordinator in the Center for Disease Control's Office of ProgramPlanning and Evaluation.

Mr. Farmer, who has served the Atlanta—based audiovisual facility in various capacities of responsibility for nearly 34 years, was Special Assistant to the Director, NMAC, for the four years prior to his present appointment.

## Serial Gap List

NLM is soliciting the help of the medical library community in filling gaps in our serial collections. If you can provide any of these items we would be most grateful. Please address them to:

National Library of Medicine
TSD-GAPS
Bethesda, Maryland 20209

*Abstracts of Scientific Papers Annual Meeting - American Society of Anesthesiologists* 1969, 1971, 1977

(Gap list continued)

*Acta Orthopaedica Scandinavica. Supplementum* 65, 1963; 105, 1967; 161, (?)

*American Journal Of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 126: 6, 1976; 131: 4, 1978

*Annual Proceedings - American Association of Zoo Veterinarians* 1969, 1970, 1971, 1975, 1976

*Annual Scientific Meeting - Aerospace Medical Association* 1963-1968, 1977

*Applied Radiology* 4: Jul, 1975

*Cancer Bulletin* 28: 4-6, 1976; 29, 2, 4-6, 1977

*Circulation. Supplement* 38: 1968; 56, 1977

*Clinical Psychologists* Vols. 14-19; 23: 1, 3-4, 1969; Vols. 24-25; 26: 1-4, 1973; 27: 1-4; 28: 1-4, 1974; 29: 2-3, 1976; 30: 1, 1976; 30: 3, 1977

*Copeia* No. 1, 1936; Nos. 1-4, 1963; 1-4, 1964; 2-4, 1965; 1-4, 1966; 1-4, 1967; 1-4, 1968; 1, 1973

*Diabetes Educator* 1: 1-4, 1975; 2: Spring, Summer, 1976

*ILAR News* (Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources) 10: 2, 1967; 13: 4, 1970; 20: 3, 1977

*Journal of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama* 44: 11-12, 1975; 47: 10, 1978

*Journal of Social Issues* 33: 4, 1977

*Medical Anthropology Newsletter* 1: 1-4, 1968; 2: 1-4, 1969; 3: 104, 1970; 4: 1-4, 1971; 5: 1-4, 1972; 6: 1-4, 1973

*Medical Bulletin* 33: 1, 1973

*Medical Bulletin, Naval Regional Medical Center* 1: 1-2, 1966; 2: 3, 1967; 6: 3, 1977

*Medical Care* 15; Feb Supp., 1977

*Medical Dimensions* 1: 2, 1972; 2: 11, 1973

*Medical Radiography and Photography* 50: 3, 1974; 51: 3, 1975

*Mind Over Matter* 8: 4, 1963; 10: 3-4, 1965; 11: 1-2, 1966; 15: 3-4, 1970; 16: 1-2, 1971

## Changes in Improvement Grant Program

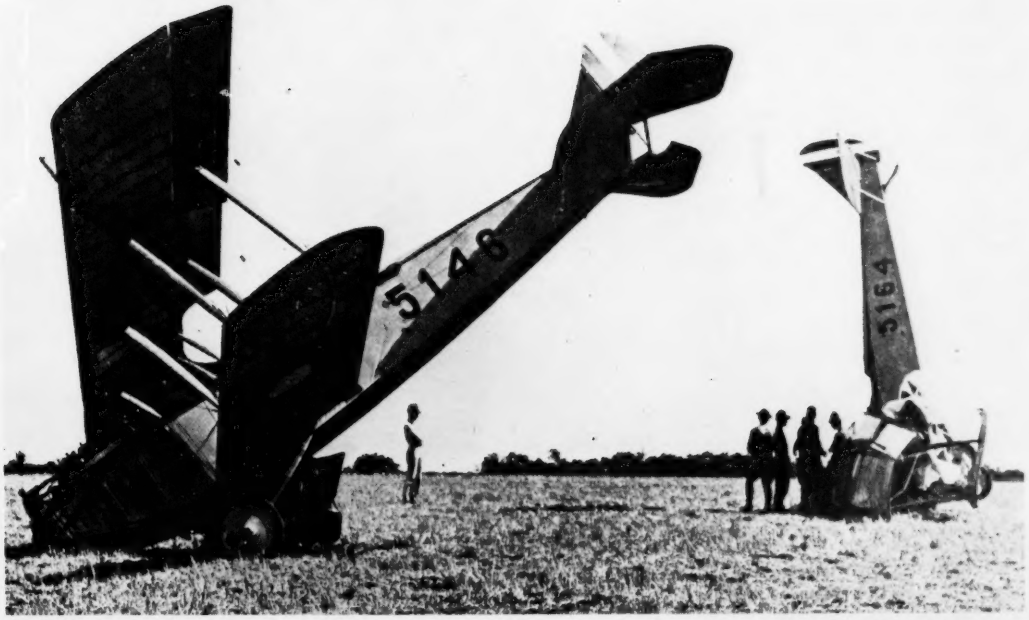
Improvement Grants are awarded to health science library consortia and to single institutions for the purpose of establishing or improving basic information collections.

For *single institutions*, support up to $4000 is available to assist in the development of a basic collection of information materials. There is a requirement for receiving institutions to match the grant up to $1000 (4:1 ratio).

For *consortia*, two-year funds are available for personnel and other expenses associated with organizational planning and development of a consortium of health science libraries. Upon completion of a shared acquisitions plan, up to $4000 is awarded, usually during the second year, to each consortium member, with a requirement for up to $1000 (4:1) in matching funds.

A consortium may be composed of hospitals, mental health centers, research institutes, community colleges, public libraries, and other institutions that provide information services for health educators, students, researchers, and providers.

Application materials reflecting these recent changes in the Improvement Grants are now available from the Regional Medical Libraries.




**The Library's exhibit on aviation medicine (*News*, February 1979) continues through May 18th. The above photo (ca. 1917) shows the results of a collision in the air. During World War I, flying accident rates were high and the fatalities from crashes were three time those resulting from enemy action. Teams of physicians helped reduce these accidents once it was seen that they were largely caused by men unfit to fly because of fatigue from months of uninterrupted combat duty. The exhibit covers aviation medicine history from the aeronauts in the late 18th century up to the preliminary medical findings of the Mecury, Gemini, and Apollo space missions.**